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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /060 W
---------- 103422
P R 221742Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5884
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, GW
SUBJECT: EC LIBERALS PLAN FOUNDING CONGRESS

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE PROVISIONAL FOUNDING CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATION OF EC LIBERAL PARTIES WILL TAKE PLACE MARCH 26-28 IN STUTTGART. LEADING REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE LIBERAL PARTIES TOOK THIS DECISION AT A PRELIMI-NARY MEETING JAN. 14-15 IN MUNICH. LUXEMBOURG PRIME
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MINISTER GASTON THORN, WHO CHAIRED THE MEETING, DECLARED

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THAT THE PARTICIPANTS AGREED BOTH ON THE LIST OF THOSE PARTIES ELIGIBLE TO BELONG AS WELL AS ON THE PROGRAM FOR THE STUTTGART MEETING. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST SUCH EC FEDERATION TO BE ESTABLISHED. END SUMMARY

1. FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER IN HIS CAPACITY AS FDP CHAIRMAN HOSTED THE MUNICH MEETING, ALTHOUGH HE HAD TO DEPART FOR BONN AHEAD OF SCHEDULE BECAUSE OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CRISIS THAT DEVELOPED IN THE LOWER SAXONY MINISTER PRESIDENT ELECTION.

2. IRELAND WILL BE THE ONLY EC NATION NOT INITIALLY REPRESENTED IN THE EC LIBERAL FEDERATION. TWO DANISH PARTIES, TWO ITALIAN PARTIES (LIBERALS AND REPUBLICANS) AND CONCEIVABLY THREE FRENCH PARTIES (GISCARD'S INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS AND THE TWO RADICAL GROUPS) WILL POSSIBLY BE INCLUDED IN THE FEDERATION.
3. THE STATUTES OF THE FEDERATION WILL ONLY BE PROVISIONALLY ADOPTED AT THE STUTTGART CONFERENCE. AFTER SUBSEQUENT RATIFICATION BY THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL PARTIES, FINAL ADOPTION WOULD THEN TAKE PLACE AT A CONGRESS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR LATE 1976. AT THAT TIME A PRESIDENT WILL BE ELECTED. THORN IS THE PRESENT FAVORITE FOR THE POST. THE MUNICH PARTICIPANTS ENVISION THAT THE FEDERATION WILL THEN DRAW UP A COMBINED ELECTION PLATFORM DURING 1977, IN ANTICIPATION OF THE 1978 DIRECT ELECTION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

4. IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER THE MUNICH PRELIMINARY MEETING THORN ADMITTED THAT THERE ARE "VARIATIONS" IN THE EC LIBERAL PARTIES, BUT THAT IT SHOULD NONETHELESS BE POSSIBLE TO UNITE ON A GENERAL POLICY. THORN ALSO DECLARED THAT THE "EUROPEAN COUNCIL WILL DECIDE DEFINITELY IN MARCH THAT DIRECT ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN 1978 IN ALL OF OUR NINE COUNTRIES." HE ADDED, "I THINK THAT IT IS HIGH TIME FOR THE POLITICAL FAMILIES, REGARDLESS WHERE THEY ARE, TO GET ORGANIZED SO THAT IT WILL BECOME A REAL EUROPEAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
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AND NOT A REGIONAL FIGHT."

COMMENT: THE FREE DEMOCRATS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY UTILIZE THE FACT THAT THE STUTTGART FOUNDING CONGRESS WILL TAKE PLACE ONE WEEK BEFORE THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG "LANDTAG" ELECTION TO GAIN SOME DOMESTIC POLITICAL MILEAGE, PARTICULARLY SINCE FDP CHAIRMAN IN B-W MARTIN BANGEMANN
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HAS BEEN SUCH A DRIVING FORCE IN BRINGING THE EC LIBERALS TOGETHER. NONETHELESS, SEVERAL FDP FEDERATION SUPPORTERS

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ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE STUTTGART CONGRESS WILL BE ONLY A PROVISIONAL MEETING, NOT THE ORIGINAL "BIG SHOW" INITIALLY ENVISIONED.

THE EC LIBERALS WILL REPRESENT, ACCORDING TO THE PLI'S MALAGODI, ABOUT 20,000,000 VOTERS. THIS NUMBER OF COURSE PALES IN SIZE TO THE BLOCS THAT THE SOCIALISTS AND OTHER LEFT PARTIES, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-CONSERVATIVES, ON THE OTHER, WILL BE ABLE TO MUSTER. STILL, IT COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT BALANCING ROLE IN DETERMINING EP OUTCOMES.
GISCARDIST PARTICIPATION IN THE EC LIBERAL FEDERATION, WHILE LIKELY, CANNOT YET BE CONSIDERED A SURE THING. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-CONSERVATIVE FORCES STILL HOPE TO ATTRACT THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS TO THEIR SIDE. AT THE SAME TIME, ACCORDING TO AN FDP SOURCE HERE, SOME OF THE LEFT-WING FRENCH RADICALS DO NOT WELCOME THE GISCARDIST PARTICIPATION, SINCE THE LATTER GROUP IS FELT BY THEM TO BE TOO CONSERVATIVE.
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